

Weekly Status & Information Report:
Week of April 11, 2005

1. Laurel Avenue Streetscape - Update (Ward 1): Work on Laurel Avenue continued this week with the demolition of the curb and asphalt along the storefronts. The construction firm staked out the new curbs and gutters. The forms for the new curbing was laid and a section of the new concrete curbing was poured. This coming Monday, weather permitting, the firm will finish up the curb work and excavate for the new sidewalk between the Pizza Movers and Polly Sue's. This section of the new sidewalk will be poured on Tuesday. Brick will be laid and the tree pits set. Updates on the status of the project can be accessed on the City's web site. They have also been posted at the following businesses - Everyday Gourmet, Takoma Laundry, and Summer Delights. Questions or concerns regarding the project should be directed to the Project Manager, Ilona Blanchard at 301.891.7205 or by email at IlonaB@takomagov.org (Housing and Community Development)
2. Farmer's Market (Ward 1): The relocation of the Farmer's Market last week went well according to John Hyde, Assistant Market Manager, and will expand into the Wackenhut parking lot this weekend. Banners announcing the change and directing customers to the new location have been posted by both City staff and the Market. The Market will return to its Laurel Avenue location once construction has been completed. (Housing and Community Development)
3. Lights on Carroll Avenue Bridge (Wards 2 and 6): Four pedestrian-scale street lights purchased by the City have been installed on the Carroll Avenue bridge over the Long Branch. They do not yet have electrical power, but are expected to be connected within the next month. (Housing and Community Development)
4. Tenant Opportunity to Purchase (Wards 4 and 5): The tenants residing at 8212 Houston Court (4 units) and 111 Lee Avenue (42 units) have received notices from the owners that their rental properties are up for sale. 8212 Houston is selling for \$535,000 and has a third party contract. 111 Lee Avenue is being offered for \$9,000,000. If neither the tenants or the county are interested in pursuing their rights to purchase the property, the owner of 111 Lee Avenue has also given notification that he will be converting the property into condominiums within the next year. This is the second property on Lee Avenue that will be converted into condominiums. 116 Lee Avenue was offered to the tenants for \$10,000,000 a few weeks ago. The owner has informed the City that he plans to market the units at prices ranging from \$200,000 to \$260,000. The City is contacting tenants in all of the properties to ensure that they are knowledgeable about their rights under the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase law and the Maryland Condominium Conversion Law. (Housing and Community Development)

5. Affordable Housing Program (All Wards): Tenant response to the offering of a Homebuyer's Club has been brisk. Many tenants have contacted the City to express their interest in being a part of a long-term educational program that will guide them through the purchasing process for buying a home. The City has partnered with the Consumer Credit Counseling Services and the Recreation Department to offer this program, which was scheduled to start in May. Funding issues, however will probably delay the start of this program but it is hoped that the class will start in June. (Housing and Community Development)
6. A Fire in the City (Ward 3): After the April 5 fire in the 6600 block of Poplar Avenue, residents expressed concern regarding which county's Emergency Call Center receive 911 calls from that area. Chief Creamer visited several homes and used residents' phones to test the system. All calls reached Montgomery County. Cell phones, which apparently were used to make initial reports of that fire, may reach Prince George's County. The fire department has reported that their procedures will dispatch units no matter which county receives or makes the call and recommends using 911 for fire emergency calls from either land line or cell phone. A letter from the Chief has been sent to residents in that block and information is being posted electronically. (Police)
7. Traffic Enforcement (All Wards): At least three arrests were made for driving under the influence on Flower Avenue and on Piney Branch Road. One man was arrested and a stolen vehicle recovered on University Blvd. More than 115 citations were issued in more than 150 traffic stops. (Police)
8. D.A.R.E. Graduation (Ward 2): Graduation was held Wednesday for the D.A.R.E. class of fifth graders at Our Lady of Sorrows. As part of the event, K-9 Diesel assisted Cpl. Malarkey in their first public canine demonstration. (Police)
9. Juvenile Arrests (Wards 1 & 4): One youth (nonresident) was arrested for simple assault after throwing a beverage on a shopkeeper. Four youths from the V and X Sectors were arrested on burglary and other charges after entering the middle school on Piney Branch at about 2 a.m. Sunday, Apr. 10; one was armed with a replica Sig Sauer air/BB gun. Two D.C. youth were arrested Monday for a strong-arm robbery of a city juvenile in the 7100 block of Cedar Ave. that afternoon. (Police)
10. Officers in Training: Nine officers attended a one-day training at the M-NCPPC Police on "Patrol Response to Terrorism in the 21st Century." Three officers attended "Bridging the Gap Between Law Enforcement and the Deaf/Hard of Hearing" offered by the Department of Social Services, La Plata. (Police)
11. Toatley-Fraser Park (Ward 5): The dedication of Toatley-Fraser Park has been confirmed for Friday, May 13, 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. Families of both namesakes have indicated an intent to attend the event, which is open to the public. (Police)

12. Recreation Inter-Agency Meeting: The Recreation Department sent 13 staff members to a Recreation and Park Inter-Agency Meeting in Rockville on Wednesday. Takoma Park joined Montgomery County, City of Gaithersburg, City of Rockville and Montgomery Village to discuss various issues of concern and solutions. Break out groups focused on community centers, athletics, senior programs, summer camps, teen programs and administration. Over 100 professionals attended and shared their experiences. (Recreation)

13. Neighborhood Meetings (Ward 1 and 3): HCD staff attended the WACO and Takoma Tower resident's meetings this week to provide updates on City initiated projects in the Old Town and Takoma Junction. (Housing and Community Development)

14. Facade Advisory Board (Ward 1): The Facade Advisory Board (FAB) met on Tuesday night and endorsed, with conditions, the installation of telecommunications equipment at Takoma Tower. The proposal was approved, with the conditions recommended by the FAB, by the Historic Preservation Commission on Wednesday, April 13. (Housing and Community Development)

15. Sad Farewell: Sanura Wade, the Recreation Department's administrative assistant for the past five years and secretary at Public Works for 5 years prior, is leaving Takoma Park. Ms. Wade has accepted an office manager position in the Annapolis area. We wish her the best of luck in her promotion and will miss her greatly. (Recreation)